

A Proposal.

AN AFTERNOON CHAT.

Mrs. E. M. Eby.

Lathrop, Calif.

Sister Wise, Introductory.

are they which testify of me." May God speed the time when every one will learn to read the Bible more, for it is the only true guide. Yours fraternally.

MRS. ELIZABETH WISE.

Parkersburg, W. Va.

From Sister Artz.

My dear sisters; As I have seen a number of the sister's names in the EVANGELIST, it makes me feel like trying to write a little. I read the EVANGELIST every week, and am much pleased with it. Would not like to be without it. The news items from the churches are very cheering. Labor on, my dear brethren, for the night cometh when man's work is done. And my dear sisters, are we doing all the good we can for our Master? We, too, have a work to perform. We often forget that we preach the loudest sermons, sometimes with our actions. Oh let us let our light so shine that those whom we associate with may see some good in us. I for one some short many times, and feel my weakness. We have the blessed assurance that we can rely on our Heavenly Father and ask forgiveness. The sisters would write more for the paper. I think I feel timid on my experience. As sister Eby expressed it. As if her feet were felt as if her feet were. For sixteen months I have been without my crutches. I am glad to hear you are taking such an interest in the paper. God bless us all, and last, is my prayer.

MRS. LEVI ARTZ.

Lathrop,

Chi

gs For Terms.

Jesus never taught such phraseology. The terms generally employed by theologians in matter of religion, tend only to mystify the uninitiated, rather than to enlighten or instruct them. Such expression as "justification," "imputed righteousness," "adoption," "election," "predestination," and a hundred such terms, do not give any one unacquainted with stereotyped religious phraseology, a proper conception of what they are intended to imply. These words are never used in any other sense than that of religion. These established unalterable, stationary, standard, theological terms, taken in their simplest meaning, as they are used in their common application, would give us but a meagre idea of their religious meaning. So the constant employment of these theological phrases only tends to make men formal and to use words of which they know but little, and which they learn to utter only by hearing others use them. Even to the average scholar, these expressions have but little meaning, and the definition is taken in a very confused and desultory way.

These theological terms have a very elastic interpretation, expanding or contracting according to the religious taste of the person or denomination which sees them. Let some one unacquainted with the position of the average hearer of prayer, or even sermon, filled with terms for the first time, and ask him to explain them. Then why not let the common-sense matter of the world echo all those who prefer to be led by their proper names, and let the religion interpreted in the same

We repeat that the language of the Lord was within the ken of the truly substituted things for the biological expressions are the inevitable. No doubt our Lord found the mind of them. Now he came not to fulfill. In the Lord's teaching the image is used, and it looks as if he avoided all reference to existing stereotyped expressions. He came to teach the sublimest doctrine the world had ever heard. Then, to reach all classes of mankind it was necessary that he used language that all alike could comprehend. He did not desire to confine his teachings to those who were rocked in the cradle of the church. A reformation, nay a revolution, was necessary in the church, when Jesus made his appearance on earth. History is repeating itself. It seems so easy for humanity to walk in the old rut. So we find that the religion of today has expressions and phrases of her own. The adoption of these phrases commenced very early in the era of Christ. We find them already extant in the epistles of the different apostles. We are not going to say that the interpretation of these expressions used by the apostles in the divisions of the church is the cause of all the trouble that has tortured the Christian church.

Jesus substituted things for terms. This he did in every parable. We can hardly read one of his parables without becoming impressed with the simplicity as well as the grandeur of his teachings. The Lord never talked of "justification," or "imputed righteousness," yet when we read the parable of the prodigal son we find these doctrines shining out in their brightest lustre. The prodigal forfeited all claim to a father's love and care; went from home; spent all his money; wasted his substance in the worst of sins, and came home without anything but rags and wretchedness; and yet, on that poor boy, a father's love and grace *put a robe, and a ring*. A child can understand that. Here we find the "imputed righteousness" in the robe. But Jesus did not teach or use a peculiar term, but he taught the thing itself.

We must remember that the garments were the emblem of his respectability. Through his waywardness he had deprived himself of the substantial clothing which was an indication of his respectability and standing in society. While garments do not always indicate that, in this instance they did. Then on this occasion rags were a disgrace, and the evidence of degradation. He had thus forfeited all claim to the respectability he had once enjoyed.

Is not this a truthful and very simple illustration of man's degradation? In childhood we are launched upon life, with nothing but innocence and virtue in the heart, unacquainted with the feelings and weaknesses that so disgrace humanity. Childhood is a beautiful representation of virtue, confidence and happiness. But through associations, and a natural tendency to the vile we soon leave this condition of innocence and virtue. We leave the Father's house. We leave all the joy that purity and harmlessness gives the soul, in the fruitless search for happiness in the doubtful paths of sin and error. Can a more truthful picture of the degradation of man be drawn than this? Then mark the culmination; among the swine, endeavoring at last to satisfy the craving of hunger with the food of the most despicable animals! So is man, when he gets into the depths of inafmy. It was not ordained that man, the image of the great God, should feed there. But a change takes place. He comes back to the father's home, where he had once enjoyed all the luxuries that make glad the soul of man.

We see instances of this every day. Jesus was only drawing a picture that was familiar to every generation of mankind. The soul refuses to be satisfied with the fruits of sin. We turn back to a Father's love. Notice the contrition of the truly penitent. We come to God throwing ourselves entirely upon his love and mercy. Our expectations, like the poor prodigal's do not soar up to a reinstatement of our former condition in the Father's household. When we occupied the home of virtue and innocence, we were so happy. After such a fall we can hardly expect to enjoy that condition again. But, like the prodigal son, we are not able to measure the Father's love.

Then look at the transformation scene in the picture: From a beggar and an outcast, we again become a son. Because of our repentance and honest vow of reformation, we are reinstated. The rags disappear and the robe of sonship is again placed upon our shoulders. We are restored to respectability and our original position in the father's household. There is imputed righteousness. When we return to God, acknowledge his authority, are willing to come again under the rule of his authority, then the Father, our Father, receives us. The robe is thrown across our shoulders. The rags and wretchedness disappear, and we are again a member of his household. There is nothing unreasonable in the Lord's teaching of "imputed righteousness." Man, with all his peculiar views, has mystified this great doctrine, until it is full of uncertainties and superstition.

EDWARD MASON.

Dayton, Ohio.

A True Motive.

Anything done for Christ is great, and it will be sure to bring a great reward. The greatness of Him to whom the service is given makes the service great. Sir Walter Raleigh cast his cloak into the muddy street for Queen Elizabeth to step upon. The act, which if done for another would have been thought trifling or ridiculous, was commemorated in history and romance as great and honorable in him because it was done for his sovereign. So the smallest gift you bestow, the humblest work you do, the feeblest talent you employ in the service of Christ, is made excellent and glorious by the infinite greatness and glory of him whom you serve. Because you cannot do a great thing, do not sit down idly and do nothing. Because you cannot startle the world with your benefactions, do not fail to give anything.